

# Lost Valley Fish Hatchery and Visitor Center

## About This Area

The Lost Valley Fish Hatchery is the largest state-owned, warmwater hatchery in Missouri and one of the largest in the nation. It is located east of Highway 65 on County Road 620, northeast of Warsaw.

The hatchery building houses a 2,000 square-foot visitor center, where visitors can learn more about warmwater fish culture, fishing, and the Missouri Department of Conservation's role in aquatic resource management. Visitors may view the hatchery production room from two large windows inside the visitor center. The center is open year round and admission is free. The facility also contains 78 rearing ponds totaling 68.3 acres, as well as a 10-acre ambient temperature pond.

Lost Valley Hatchery rears a variety of fish species including walleye, muskellunge, channel catfish, largemouth bass, striped and hybrid bass, bluegill and hybrid sunfish. The facility is being used to research propagation methods for endangered fish, as well as for native freshwater mussels. Fish raised at the hatchery are used to stock public and private waters throughout Missouri.

Construction began in 1997 as a project of the Missouri Department of Conservation. Seventy-five percent of the \$19 million construction cost was funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Act, which places a federal excise tax on such items as boat motors, fishing tackle and boat fuel. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service distributes these funds among the states according to the number of fishing permits sold and the amount of land and water. These funds are approved for projects that augment sport fish restoration. To that end, Lost Valley Hatchery is the largest project funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Act in the nation.

The Lost Valley Fish Hatchery and Visitor Center is situated on 971 acres in the Leigh flats area east of Truman Lake. Visitors walking through the hatchery grounds can experience a variety of

natural settings, from prairie areas to Missouri glades. A section of Sterett Creek runs through this valley. It supports native fish, as well as aquatic invertebrates like crayfish, mayflies and dragonflies.

The hatchery grounds support a diversity of plant life. There are plentiful cedar stands with mixed hardwoods in a forested section where plants like fragrant sumac, violets and star grass are plentiful. Two natural glades are home to native wildflowers, including purple coneflower, Indian paintbrush, fringed puccoon, prickly pear cactus and feverfew.

Wildlife is frequently seen on the area. The glades are prime locations to see tarantulas, lizards and scorpions. Uncut timber provides ideal habitat for whitetailed deer and turkey, and even bobcats.

Bird species are plentiful, including eastern bluebirds and indigo buntings. Great blue herons, green herons and belted kingfishers are also frequently seen. Winter bird visitors include bald eagles and gulls.

Waterfowl use both the detention ponds on the hatchery grounds and a wetland area created from a borrow pit. Ongoing development includes a birding blind, picnic areas, interpretative trails, food plots and native wildflower gardens, as well as bank fishing access to Lake of the Ozarks.

## Things to Do

- Hunting. The area east of the access road is open to all statewide hunting seasons. Some special regulations apply. The area is home to good numbers of deer and turkey.
- Fishing. A 1/2-acre stocked pond adjacent to the Visitor Center is open to children ages 15 and under during visitor center hours. Six disabled-accessible piers and an asphalt sidewalk enhance accessibility. Bait and tackle are available free of charge at the visitor center. Children wishing to fish should be accompanied by an adult and must check in at the visitor center before fishing.
- Hiking.
- Nature study and wildlife viewing.
- Outdoor photography.
- Exhibits. A variety of exhibits focusing on fishing and aquatic themes include an oversize model of a native Missouri mussel, a model of hatchery

water flow, measuring and identifying fish, DVD interactives, and many other demonstrations and displays.

- Aquarium. The center includes a 12,700-gallon aquarium which houses several species of Missouri fish.
- Gift Shop. A nature gift shop is available for those wanting to purchase Conservation Department merchandise or who are looking for a nature-oriented gift. The center also sells Missouri hunting and fishing permits.

## Hatchery Facts

- Water to operate the hatchery is drawn from seven wells that each are about 1,200 feet deep. A computer system rotates well usage to lessen the effect on the water table.
- The hatchery contains 61 one-acre ponds, 14 half-acre ponds and three one-tenth acre ponds. Each one-acre pond holds about 1 million gallons of water.
- Each pond contains polypropylene liners to decrease maintenance and reduce the effect of burrowers such as crayfish.

## Rules and Regulations:

*Visitor center hours are Tuesday - Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., from Oct. 1 to March 15. After March 15, the center is open seven days a week through September 30 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, hours are extended until 5 p.m. Area gates are open 8 a.m. until the visitor center closes.*

*The visitor center is closed Christmas, New Year's and Thanksgiving.*

- No littering. Waste containers may be used only for disposal of trash generated on area.
- No fireworks.
- No open fires.
- No free-running pets. Dogs must be leashed or confined when not being trained or used for hunting. Special use permits are required for any organized dog training activity or trials.
- Destroying, cutting or removing vegetation, including wildflowers, is prohibited. Nuts, berries, fruits, mushrooms and wild greens may be taken for personal consumption only. Taking of wild greens from natural areas is not allowed.

- Motor vehicles are restricted to the access road and parking area.
- Horseback riding is permitted only on roads open to vehicles and on designated horse trails or by special-use permit.
- No camping permitted.
- Bicycles are allowed only on roads and trails open to vehicles, except where further restricted by posting. Groups of more than 10 cyclists must obtain a special-use permit.
- No target shooting allowed.

### **Fishing and Boating:**

- Fishing is permitted under Lake of the Ozarks regulations on the portion of Lake of the Ozarks adjacent to Lost Valley Hatchery. The following special regulation applies.
- Only anglers age 15 and younger are allowed to fish in the area's Kids Fishing Pond.

### **Hunting and Trapping:**

*Area east of the access road is open to hunting under statewide regulations. The following special regulations also apply.*

- Deer hunting is restricted to archery methods only.
- Single-projectile firearms are prohibited.
- No hunting is allowed west of the access road.
- Only portable tree stands may be placed or used and only between Sept. 15 and Jan. 31. Each stand must be identified with the name and address of the user and must be removed from the area by Feb. 1. Use of nails or other materials that would damage the tree is prohibited.
- Trapping of furbearers is permitted only as specifically authorized by special use permit.

*(Regulations are from the Wildlife Code of Missouri and selected statutes of the State of Missouri. Special area regulations are from Chapter 11 of the Wildlife Code. Free copies of the Wildlife Code and Special Area Regulations are available from the Conservation*

*This conservation area was acquired in part through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*



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and Visitor Center



## **Welcome**

Missouri is a state rich in history, folklore and natural resources. The Conservation Department encourages you to visit, use and enjoy this area and other Department areas.

Land surrounding Lost Valley Fish Hatchery and Visitor Center belongs to private landowners. The boundaries adjoining private property are clearly marked. Please respect landowners' rights with these simple courtesies: obtain permission before going on private property, pick up all litter, be careful with fire, do not damage property, practice safe hunting.

### **Nearby Department Areas:**

Brickley Hollow Access  
Edmonson Access

Hi Lonesome Prairie Conservation Area  
Drover's Prairie Conservation Area  
Paint Brush Prairie Conservation Area  
Truman Reservoir Lands

### **For local information, contact:**

Lost Valley Fish Hatchery  
RR5 Box 30A  
Warsaw, MO 65355  
660/438-4465

**Your comments and suggestions regarding area facilities and management are welcome.**

# **Lost Valley Fish Hatchery and Visitor Center**

**Missouri Department of  
CONSERVATION**

